6 February 2019

Dear Chris

'No deal' Brexit preparations

I am writing to ask about two issues related to the Department's 'no deal' Brexit preparations.

Firstly, the Committee has been told that train drivers on cross-Channel routes still have no clear information about whether they need to begin the process of applying for a new licence within an EU27 country to continue driving on these routes post-Brexit, and whether this will be possible before 29 March 2019. We have also heard that there is a lack of certainty about whether UK-based applicants will have to undergo psychometric or medical testing that could put them at a disadvantage as part of the application process.

The DfT's 'no deal' guidance, published on 12 October 2018, states:

If you currently drive trains into an EU country on a UK licence, you would need a new EU licence and certification documents from the national safety authority of the country you wish to drive into. You should apply for this as soon as possible.

Arrangements for operators of cross-border services would be subject to any bilateral arrangements that the UK negotiates with individual EU countries.

Can you update the Committee with the latest guidance to UK-licensed train drivers who work on cross-border services on whether they require an EU27-issued licence after 29 March? In addition, please clarify how the Government's bilateral negotiations with France are progressing, what impact they will have on the licensing question and whether this ongoing issue is preventing the Government from providing certainty to the industry. We would also like to know whether UK-licensed drivers will be at any disadvantage in terms of the application requirements for an EU27 licence, compared to applicants from EU27 countries.

Secondly, we have noted that some of the DfT's 'no deal' Brexit guidance has been withdrawn and replaced in the past two weeks. We are concerned that some of the new guidance lacks the detail that was provided formerly. For example, the guidance on aviation security (24 September) had detailed information for air cargo shippers. In the new guidance (14 January) there is no detailed information and none of the links appear to direct people
using the guidance to such information. The Committee would like to know when and why decisions were taken to replace existing guidance and what reasons – other than no longer being correct – certain sections of the previous guidance have not been replicated.

We would appreciate a response by 18 February.

Yours sincerely,

Lilian Greenwood MP
Chair of the Transport Select Committee